UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
MAR 25 1952
PERIODICAL READING ROOM

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

VOL. XLIX, NO. 6: MARCH 13, 1952

CONTENTS

The Role of Conventions in Ethics: HENRY DAVID AIKEN 173

On the Tautologous Nature of Stevenson's Distinction between Disagreement in Belief and Disagreement in Attitude: SOLOMON E. LEVY 177

Book Reviews

HERMANN DIELS, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker:* A. L. HILLIARD . 191

CATHERINE RAU, *Art and Society: A Reinterpretation of Plato:* ROBERT D. MACK 192

FRITZ WEHRLI, *Straton von Lampsakos:* A. L. HILLIARD 196

CICERO, *Brutus; On the Nature of the Gods; On Divination; On Duties, translated by Hubert M. Poteat:* PAUL O. KRISTELLER .. 198

Notes and News 199

PUBLISHED FORTNIGHTLY

BY THE

JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, INC.

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

FOUNDED BY FREDERICK J. E. WOODBRIDGE AND WENDELL T. BUSH

EDITORS: Herbert W. Schneider, John H. Randall, Jr., Ernest Nagel.

MANAGING EDITOR: Emerson Buchanan.

Communications to the editors should be addressed to the Managing Editor, 515 West 116th Street, New York 27, N. Y. Subscriptions and advertisements should be sent to THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, Prince and Lemon Streets, Lancaster, Pa., or 515 West 116th Street, New York 27, N. Y. The annual subcription price (twenty-six numbers) is $5.00. The price of single numbers is 30 cents, double numbers, 60 cents.

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY is owned by the Journal of Philosophy, Inc., and published fortnightly at Prince and Lemon Sts., Lancaster, Pa. Editorial Office: 515 West 116th St., New York 27, N. Y. President, Ernest Nagel; Vice President, Herbert W. Schneider; Treasurer, Frederick A. Dewey; Secretary, Iris Wilder Dean.

Entered as second class matter, March 18, 1921, at the Post Office at Lancaster, Pa., under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Theory of Order

by W. DONALD OLIVER, PH.D., *University of Missouri*

A full-scale account of the role played by order in man's attempt to understand and control his natural environment. A major philosophical work which throws light on a surprisingly large number of the traditional problems of philosophy. Jointly sponsored by the Research Council of the University of Missouri and the Publications Committee of the American Philosophical Association.

"One of the most substantial contributions to philosophy which I have read in recent years . . . a work of first-rate quality and importance."
—PROFESSOR HERBERT W. SCHNEIDER, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

357 pages; index $5.00

THE ANTIOCH PRESS, Yellow Springs, Ohio

VOLUME XLIX, No. 6 MARCH 13, 1952

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

THE ROLE OF CONVENTIONS IN ETHICS

NOW that the rage over the emotive theory has begun to die down, it begins to be possible to investigate the normative aspects of moral discourse in earnest. No one seriously doubts any longer that the essential point of the theory must be granted, namely that the full normative or practical sense of a moral judgment can not be wholly explicated in terms of its descriptive meaning, and that although such a judgment may "contain" a proposition which is true or false, its distinctive normative claim does not rest exclusively in this fact alone. What was less evident before the clamor subsided is that there are conditions of relevance in moral deliberation and argumentation. No reason is a "good" reason just because it proves effective in sustaining attitudes prescribed by the moral judgment itself. There are in short certain conventions in ethics which control and correct our vagrant inclinations and the associations that commonly determine them. These conventions are embodied in the notions of "normality," "reasonableness," "disinterestedness," "sensible person," and the like. It is with the special characteristics and functions of these conventions that this paper is concerned.

It is not profitable, I think, to debate the question whether these expressions convey any cognitive meaning. It would be absurd to say that I do not "understand" anything by them. But *what* I understand by them is far from precise, nor, as we shall see, does this in the least impair their usefulness. But whatever ideas they may convey, their cognitive significance is secondary to their "corrective" roles. And it is with this aspect of them that we shall be chiefly concerned.

Here, as in so many other places in moral philosophy, the initial insights are Hume's. Now most of Hume's critics have classified him as a characteristic representative of the sentimental school, according to which benevolence is the source of all moral approval and sympathy the psychological mechanism whereby benevolence is "irrigated." What they have usually failed to observe is that an analysis of moral judgments which reduces them to expressions of sympathetic benevolence can not account for the "corrective" role which Hume assigned to "morals." According to him, we have

no instinctual love of mankind as such. Our sympathies are strongest in relation to those who most closely resemble ourselves, weakest toward those who appear most dissimilar. It is evident also, he believes, that our sentiments vary in accordance with the distance of their objects in relation to ourselves. Hence our benevolent impulses and our individual sentiments of praise and blame tend to be fluctuating and parochial. This, however, does not greatly affect our moral judgments of human motives and actions.

In judging the moral character of any person or act, we ignore our variable personal feelings and take a "more general view." Yet we are able to do this, not because of any particular decision on our part, but, rather, because of our habitual use of certain social conventions which dispose us to discount our variable temporary attitudes and "still apply the terms expressive of our liking and disliking in the same manner as if we remained in one point of view."[1] "Experience soon teaches us this method of correcting our sentiments, or at least of correcting our language, where the sentiments are more stubborn and unalterable."[2] "Such corrections," he adds by way of comparison and elucidation, "are common with regard to all the senses; and, indeed, it were impossible we could ever make use of language or communicate our sentiments to one another, did we not correct the momentary appearances of things and overlook our present situation."[3]

It is worth remarking in this connection that Hume also speaks of the corrective role of aesthetic judgments which serve to offset our variable individual responses to works of art. In the essay *On the Standard of Taste* he points out how, despite the inescapable truth of the dictum that there is no disputing about tastes, it is also from a common-sense viewpoint absurd to deny that there is an order of merit among works of art which is somehow public and independent of the variations of our tastes. By this latter "species of common sense," he says suggestively, the former is "modified" and "restrained."

At this point, unfortunately, Hume leaves us to our own devices. Let us compare, then, for what it may be worth, the concept of "objective red" and analogous conceptions in ethics. In both cases, first of all, a distinction is made between appearance and reality. In both cases a means is provided for offsetting fluctuations due to the "accidental" factors affecting our changing views of things. In both cases we are enabled by the distinctions to make

[1] Cf. *Hume's Moral and Political Philosophy*, edited by H. D. Aiken (New York, Hafner, 1948), pp. 137–138.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 138.

[3] *Ibid.*

communications in which the subject under discussion is responded to in similar ways by both parties. But there are also important differences. The function of the judgment "x is really or objectively red" is to describe the appearance of x under certain standard conditions and to correct hasty beliefs based upon appearances which may be abnormal. The result of such a judgment, for the addressee, is information. He is thereby enabled to predict how, if he looks at the object in a certain way, it will appear to him. The function of the moral judgment, however, is not primarily informative and predictive. What it aims to correct is not belief but attitude. It "restrains" our feelings, not our perceptions, or, better, it determines us, in those deliberations upon which our "general decisions" are based, to consider the object imaginatively without regard to our more personal interest. When we ask whether something is really right, we are, in effect, enjoined to perform one of the "imaginative experiments" so frequently employed in books on moral philosophy. But more than this, a type of attitude is aroused which regards the objects reflected upon from a certain point of view which we call "disinterested" or "social." We are induced, so to speak, to impersonate the role of a person imbued only with the fundamental social presses of the community. The effect of ethical discourse, in short, is to standardize our deliberations and general decisions, just as the effect of statements about objective predicates is to standardize our beliefs.

Thus in ethics normative conventions prevail which, although they do not precisely correspond to any "apparent" sentiment or feeling, nevertheless serve to incite certain relatively uniform attitudes in most persons to whom they are addressed. They serve to "correct" our sentiments, and yet "they" are also dimensions of our natures. Otherwise their normative appeal would be nil. It is, after all, only because we are social animals that they have any hold upon us at all.

There is another difference between "really red" and "really right." Both, as we have seen, involve notions of "normality," "competence," or "reasonableness." In the latter case, however, the conditions of normality can not be precisely stated. Perhaps the difference is one of degree, but if so the degree of vagueness is far greater than in the former case. But if we bear in mind the different roles of the respective concepts, we shall see that the vagueness of "competence" in ethical criticism is proper to it. The point is that the functions of ethical criticism are (a) to cause us to reflect deliberately and dispassionately, not to predict precisely what will occur, and (b) to produce agreement in our general decisions and in our procedures for resolving disagreements that arise inevitably in

relation to the prevailing moral code. For such purposes the concept needs to be flexible and vague. Too much rigidity in meaning would render it useless. The "realities" with which ethical criticism is mainly concerned are "sober second thoughts" and "calm passions," the settled convictions which determine our long-range behavior as social beings. It has no particular objective or goal in view, merely a way of settling differences that arise from our particular passions and preoccupations.

In speaking of "normative conventions" in ethics I do not mean "decisions," as this term is ordinarily used. I may "decide" to go to the grocery store; I may decide to let the word "value," in a particular essay, mean "object of desire." But just as the ordinary meanings of words are not established by decisions or stipulations, but, rather, by unconscious processes of association and imitation, so the conventions of ethics are learned ideo-motor dispositions, not particular "acts of will." This is part of what we mean when we say that ethical norms are "social": they are acquired by processes of conditioning and imitation of which we are largely unaware.

It may be worth while, at this point, to compare the role of conventions in ethics with what recent writers have called "myths" in the sphere of political ideology. Both expressions are perhaps misleading. Just as the former term may mislead the unwary into supposing that ethical norms are personal decisions, so the latter term may suggest to some that a political myth is a deliberately perpetrated lie by means of which the rulers control the ruled. But as Professors Lasswell and Kaplan observe in connection with their own discerning analysis of political myths, the expression need not be interpreted as necessarily imputing a fictional, false, or irrational character to ideological symbols.[4] It refers to an aspect of "their functioning" not "their properties."[5] A political myth does not describe any existing or historical state of affairs. Nor does it prescribe any particular political act or obligation. Its role, rather, is to set in motion and to direct certain general attitudes toward existing political institutions.

But whereas myths function, as Lasswell and Kaplan point out, in preserving or supplanting the existing political order, ethical conventions, as here conceived, have a somewhat different role. Since they permit the criticism of existing moral rules, they do not serve to preserve the existing moral order altogether. But since they themselves involve standards of propriety or reasonableness

[4] Lasswell & Kaplan, *Power and Society* (Yale University Press, 1950), pp. 116 ff.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 117.

they are not calculated to produce a complete transformation of social attitudes already afoot. In short, they neither wholly supplant the existing moral code, nor do they wholly maintain it. Rather do they enable its correction or modification within a more general framework of general norms which itself changes slowly by processes of accretion and reinterpretation.

I suggest, then, by way of conclusion, that the role of such notions as "reasonable" in ethics is to dispose us (*a*) to take a "second look," to consider a wider variety of alternatives and a longer range of consequences than we have hitherto considered, and (b) to exercise our praise and blame without regard to our present personal feelings. The injunction "Be reasonable," in ethics, does not tell us what to look for or what to approve. It does not prescribe any particular attitude of favor or disfavor. Rather does it induce a point of view or press which invites imaginative experiments and the impersonation of the role of the "social man." For no two persons will it have precisely the "same" meaning. For no person will its meaning be exact. But, again, this is not a serious handicap, given the function which it performs.

HENRY DAVID AIKEN
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

ON THE TAUTOLOGOUS NATURE OF STEVENSON'S DISTINCTION BETWEEN DISAGREEMENT IN BELIEF AND DISAGREEMENT IN ATTITUDE [1]

IN the current ethical controversy, the emotivists seem to have overlooked the fact that attitudes of a valuational kind enter as prior conditions into the determination of fact. In this paper, the consequences of this oversight for Stevenson's theory of ethics are examined in some detail.

I

According to Stevenson, when two persons disagree about the value of something, they may be disagreeing about matters of *factual* belief or they may be disagreeing about their *attitudes* of approval or disapproval towards some object or action; or, of course, they may be disagreeing about both. The two kinds of disagreement are said to be uniquely differentiated in that the first, "disagreement in belief," i.e., disagreement about facts, is open to settlement by the usual methods of science, while the second,

[1] A paper presented at the Regional Philosophy Conference, University of California at Los Angeles, May 12, 1951.

"disagreement in attitude," is not. The connection between the two, in the light of this distinction, is succinctly stated in Stevenson's contention that matters of fact support ethical judgments "psychologically,"[2] not logically or inductively; and that, correspondingly, "agreement in belief" supports "agreement in attitude" in the same way. Now if reasons and facts support ethical judgments "psychologically," "in a way that neither inductive nor deductive logic can exhaustively characterize,"[3] then, *a priori*, we may expect that two people may have a disagreement in attitude even though both agree as to all matters of fact ("agreement in belief"), and "even though neither had made any logical or inductive error, or omitted any relevant evidence."[4]

In short, Stevenson's thesis grants that the extension and growth of knowledge affects the logical status of factual judgments, but denies that a parallel condition exists for ethical judgments: the extension or growth of knowledge can not alter the basically illogical status of ethical judgments as related to fact. On this thesis, every instance of ethical agreement is to be regarded as a fortuitous occurrence, while there may be ethical disagreement even where complete, *objectively* certifiable agreement exists for all matters of fact, including those relating to human behavior. These conclusions directly follow upon the fact that if our world is one in which the connection between ethical judgments and the "supporting" factual and logical information is "psychological," it is a world in which the augmentation of knowledge[5]—even to the point of completion—can not alter the initially postulated, non-inductive, non-logical character of that connection. While it is true that education and the development of scientific knowledge may bring about a change in attitude, the significance of this change for an objective description of ethics is vitiated by the claim that it is brought about "psychologically," not logically. Hence, in the context of logical justification, and on Stevenson's thesis, it must be maintained that all of the individual's knowledge and skill, not excluding his skill in

[2] C. L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), p. 113.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

[4] C. L. Stevenson, "The Nature of Ethical Disagreement," in *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, selected and edited by Herbert Feigl and Wilfrid Sellars (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1949), p. 591.

[5] The existence or applicability of which is in reality denied. This means that Stevenson's theory is one which is unverifiable in principle, since the "psychological" connection which it postulates is neither logically nor deductively characterizable.

linguistic analysis, are worthless or irrelevant when it comes to the matter of logically formulating ethical judgments.

If one accepts Stevenson's premise, this conclusion must be granted: It is idle to speak of one psychological influence—or ethical judgment—as being more logical than another; psychological influences, like all logically inconsistent propositions, are members-in-common of the same irrational or null class.

II

This paper will undertake to show that Stevenson's thesis is untenable, either in the context of logic or in the context of fact. In opposition to the position which he takes, it will be contended here that agreement in all matters of fact *logically* implies agreement in fundamental attitudes or ethical judgments; while, specifically, it will be contended that Stevenson does not succeed in citing a single case in which there is real (indisputable) agreement in belief when a disagreement in attitude is present, and that there are theoretical reasons why we may believe that no case of this kind can be cited. These conclusions are indicated by the two mutually exclusive possibilities which present themselves: Either (1) both parties to the dispute initially agree to settle their differences in a context of logical justification, in which case they *agree in attitude* to abide by logical-inductive criteria, and any remaining disagreement must be of a factual-logical kind; or (2) they refuse to agree in this kind of attitude, in which case any further disagreement is without objective significance for ethical theory, only serving to confirm the self-evident, tautologous proposition that wherever there is refusal to subscribe to logical-inductive criteria, there is disagreement (or agreement) of an illogical (irrationally motivated) kind.

Now *prima facie,* Stevenson's object is not to reiterate endlessly what should be a minor truism. That individuals exist who willfully or ignorantly act irrationally is a fact not to be denied; but this does not prove that ethical judgments are indefensible *in principle.* It is necessary to conclude, therefore, that if Stevenson is presenting us with a distinctive thesis, it must lie in the contention that no logical-inductive grounds are to be found—or exist—for ethical judgments; while, in the context of ethical disputes, it must lie in the contention that even if two disputing parties agree as to all matters of fact, and in doing so agree to discount or correct their own prejudices or isolated feelings, and haphazard or unguided early training—*as they must if they are to reach agreement in belief which is objectively certifiable*—it never-

questionable

theless remains logically possible that they should continue to have a disagreement in attitude.

To show that the latter contentions are inherently untenable, and that therefore Stevenson is left only with the alternative of stating a minor truism, a twofold argument will be presented. (1) Every claim that no rational (logical-inductive) grounds exist upon which to act or judge, reduces, upon analysis, to the failure to act or think rationally, either as the result of a voluntary decision or because of *de facto* inability (i.e., ignorance). (2) Basic attitudes cannot be dissociated from fact or agreement in fact, because the determination and acceptance of objective fact, as it operates in science, already presupposes the acceptance of certain generic attitudes as *sine qua non;* and the acceptance of these generic attitudes is incompatible with the presence of other attitudes of the kind for which no logical-inductive justification is forthcoming.

III

Before proceeding to consider these points in detail, it will be useful first to make explicit some implications of Stevenson's theory which have not previously been considered; and then to examine the signification of the terms "attitude" and "psychological" in the context of Stevenson's theory. In terms of the distinction which is made between "disagreement in belief" and "disagreement in attitude," the difference between a descriptive or scientific proposition and an ethical proposition is to be explained in terms of the "emotive meanings" of the terms which appear in the latter. When we call any type of conduct good or bad, what we are doing, according to Stevenson, is expressing an attitude of approval or disapproval, without asserting anything that could be true or false. In doing this, our primary aim is said to be to persuade others to believe as we do, and, possibly, to do as we do. Thus it is said that ethical judgments, like imperative propositions, are "used . . . more for encouraging, altering, or redirecting people's aims and conduct than for simply describing them"[6]; and that they perform this function not through persuasion based on logical-inductive reasons, but "psychologically," "in a way that neither inductive logic nor deductive logic can exhaustively characterize." "Attitudes," therefore, are consequent on "psychological" influences, and the signification of this term becomes of prime importance.

Now a "psychological" influence must, if it really be an influence, be causal in nature; and its presence either must be

[6] *Ethics and Language*, p. 21.

known to both parties or it must be unknown and act as an unconscious influence. In case a psychological influence operates without being recognized by disputing parties, the corresponding disagreement in attitude is without significance, since the disagreement is based upon ignorance of relevant facts. An agreement in belief which is objectively significant for ethical theory can not occur in a context in which the disputants are unaware of some of the causes which motivate them to agree or disagree.

If, to meet this objection, it is reported that the disputing parties *are* aware of the existence of all causal influences, but still continue to have a disagreement in attitude, then, properly speaking, a disagreement attributable to "psychological influences" no longer exists. What remains is a disagreement in attitude attributable to the fact that both disputants are agreed to argue in a context in which they are indifferent as to whether the influences which motivate them to agree or disagree, are rational or irrational, justifiable or unjustifiable; and this only illustrates an instance of *willful* refusal to abide by logical-inductive criteria, not the *objective* non-existence of such criteria. Therefore, if one is precise in language and meaning, it is no longer correct to say, under the amended circumstances, that the two parties to the dispute differ for reasons which are "psychological"; for since both disputants are now aware of the character of the psychological influences which exist, any subsequent disagreement is due either to the voluntary decision to let irrational influences go uncorrected, or to the belief that a knowledge of these causal influences and the conditions which qualify or determine their existence leaves unaffected the logical status of the context in which the judgments are formulated.

The latter belief, however, does not lead to a disagreement in attitude, as required by Stevenson's thesis; it only leads to a complete and exhaustive agreement in belief, including the belief, *accepted as factually true,* that attitudes can not be supported logically and inductively by facts and reasons. But this kind of agreement in belief, as we shall later demonstrate, leads to a *reductio ad absurdum,* as does any theory which, instead of explaining the facts, merely supposes them to be inexplicable.

It follows from the signification of "psychological" that either a person allows himself to be persuaded by irrational emotive influences, in which case he loses all right to claim that he is defending his judgment in a context of logical justification, or he does not allow himself to be persuaded at all, in which case ethical judgments can no longer be said to retain their primary function

of persuasion. Either of these alternatives, and the fact that there are alternatives, seem fatal to Stevenson's position.

It should be added that if one holds to the doctrine that the only kind of persuasion which exists is "psychological" persuasion, then one can not go on to say, as Stevenson himself does in an unguarded moment, that "persuasion is sometimes good and sometimes bad, depending on the circumstances."[7] All that one can say is: "Persuasion is sometimes of one indifferent kind and sometimes of another indifferent kind, depending on the circumstances." On the other hand, if one admits that there is such a thing as rational persuasion—persuasion motivated by logical-inductive reasons—then Stevenson's thesis reduces to the trivial contention that some people are not so persuaded.

The substance of the above discussion is that there are two kinds of irrationality which must be carefully distinguished from each other: (1) *de facto* irrationality—the involuntary or subjective inability to think or act rationally, or the voluntary refusal to do so; (2) metaphysically real irrationality—the claim that there are no rational (logical-inductive) grounds upon which to act, although the desire (or attitude) to look for such grounds is present. Of these two, only the second has theoretical importance for the ethical investigator; but every instance purporting to illustrate its truth must, upon analysis, turn out to be an instance of the first kind, i.e., an instance of irrational response, willfully or ignorantly performed. This conclusion follows not only from the above illustration but also from purely theoretical-logical considerations. Only if one or more of the following propositions are true, do we have the state of affairs denoted by the postulate of metaphysically grounded irrationality:

I. No causes exist for our behaving the way we do.

II. There are causes for our behavior, but they are unknowable in principle.

III. The causes of human behavior are the proper subject matter of scientific inquiry (i.e., they exist and are knowable), but the moral agent's knowledge of their existence leaves unaffected the irrational status of his ethical judgment, because

1. There is no way of altering, modifying, or neutralizing these causes (if irrational); or because

2. Some of these causes are inalterable, and there is no such thing as rational behavior in the face of inalterability and fact.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 167.

None of these propositions is acceptable, unless one places human behavior outside of nature and natural law, and therefore outside the scope of scientific inquiry.

IV

For a concrete illustration of these objections, consider the following hypothetical case which Stevenson presents to support his thesis that agreement in belief need not be preceded or followed by agreement in attitude:

> The trustees for the estate of a philanthropist have been instructed to forward any charitable cause that seems to them worthy. One suggests that they provide hospital facilities for the poor, the other that they endow universities. They accordingly raise the ethical question as to which cause, under the existing circumstances, is the more worthy. In this case we may naturally assume that the men are unselfish and farsighted, having attitudes that are usually referred to, with praise, as "moral ideals" or "altruistic aims." And we may assume that each man respects the other's aims, being no less interested in reconsidering his own suggestion than in leading the other to accept it.[8]

We are told that in this situation the trustees must begin their discussion with a disagreement in attitude, since one trustee will begin by favoring the hospitals and the other the universities. If this is the case, what are the circumstances in this illustration which attest to the presence of a disagreement in attitude of the "psychological" kind required by Stevenson's theory?

Consider the circumstances which surround this alleged disagreement. We are told that both trustees possess attitudes of unselfishness and farsightedness, that both favor moral ideals and altruistic aims, that each man respects the other's opinion and is open to suggestion, and that both are impartial. These attitudes, of course, establish that the trustees will conduct their "dispute" in a context of logical justification; and also they explicitly establish those attitudes which are *sine qua non* for the objective determination *and* acceptance of fact (i.e., which are indispensable for the establishment of meaningful agreement in belief). It will be noted that were these attitudes absent, this illustration would be pointless, since it would not be known whether the ensuing disagreement was due to the voluntary or involuntary refusal to seek rational grounds, or due to the fact that, metaphysically speaking, no such grounds exist.

Having cited these general and fundamental agreements in attitude—attitudes which establish that both parties are desirous of settling their differences in a context of logical justification—

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Stevenson then goes on to remark that "obviously, there will be a tentative disagreement in attitude. . . . Since the one man begins by favoring the hospitals, and the other the universities, their discussion must continue until one shares the initial attitude of the other, or until both come to favor some intermediate or alternative policy."[9] If, however, Stevenson maintains that the attitudes just described *truly* characterize the behavior of both trustees, then clearly the alleged difference of opinion does not report a disagreement in attitude at all, but only the fact that each trustee adopts a tentative position for the purpose of opening the discussion and conducting preliminary survey talks. In other words, the alleged disagreement merely reports an *imaginative* adoption of alternate positions; something quite natural to two investigators who are armed with the same facts, the same attitudes, and the same aims; and who seek to make explicit the nature or relative worth of alternatives which suggest themselves.

That this is all that can be said to happen in the trusteeship case is quite clear. Both parties are described as possessing the same aims, the same impartiality, the same interests; and both agree as to all the facts. One opens the discussion by tentatively suggesting hospitals, the other by tentatively suggesting educational institutions, *but both agree as to the merits of each.* Either trustee might have adopted either position without in any way altering his fundamental attitudes or beliefs; either exploratory position is compatible with the stated attitudes and beliefs of each trustee. On the other hand, if the alleged disagreement is a genuine one, it is not compatible with the stated attitudes, nor with the existence of "agreement in belief" which is given as established fact.

The ethical issue, *if there is one,* can not reside in the fact that discussion does not begin until one party puts forth a tentative suggestion. A tentative suggestion to consider any entity, X, does not constitute an attitude. If this type of exploratory "disagreement" is labeled "disagreement in attitude," then we are compelled to say that whenever scientists are engaged in controversy or disagreement, or in defending alternate theories, they are having a disagreement in attitude. But when this happens, disagreement in attitude can no longer be said to characterize ethical disputes uniquely.

In the trusteeship case, since the rationality of both trustees has been established from the very start, the disagreement is either a misnomer, or the trustees do not have the rational attitudes which

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

they are asserted to have. The alleged disagreement, whatever its true nature, can not be ascribed to the existence of bias; for both trustees have agreed, by their attitudes, to discount or neutralize personal feelings *when unjustifiable,* and to arrive at a decision based solely on relevant matters of fact, where, it will be noted, what is relevant is itself a matter to be objectively and empirically determined, and not a matter to be settled by whatever haphazard or (specific) prejudicial attitudes the parties to the dispute may happen to have at the moment of their dispute. Relevancy is not simply a fortuitous function of attitude—though it may often chance to be this.

The trusteeship case leads to a dilemma. This dilemma characterizes every attempt to defend the proposition that "It is logically possible . . . that two men should continue to disagree in attitude even though they had all their beliefs in common." [10] The dilemma may be stated as follows. If it is claimed that agreement exists for all matters of fact, and the matters of fact have objective certification, then the attitude of impartiality must be present as a co-existent, necessary condition; therefore, no matter what the subject of controversy may be, particular emotions or attitudes which have no basis in fact or logic can not be introduced except mistakenly, that is, except in the belief that there actually exists a state of affairs which logically implies the adoption of the feelings or attitudes in question; in which case any disagreement is a disagreement in belief; while if it is maintained that the attitude of impartiality is absent, then the conditions neceessary for agreement in belief are also absent, in which case any subsequent disagreement in attitude is without significance.

Thus, for every disagreement in attitude which is significant for ethical theory, there must exist disagreement in belief.

V

Consider now a possibility suggested in an earlier part of the discussion. The reference at the time was to the case where two men, agreeing to settle their ethical differences in a context of logical justification, both come to the conclusion that attitudes can not be logically or inductively supported by facts. In this case there is agreement in belief, including the belief, accepted as *factually and metaphysically* true, that there is no such thing as logically supporting ethical judgments, whether one's own or someone's else. Both men may then be said to have reached the objective conclusion that illogical or extra-logical persuasion is the only kind of persuasion which exists.

[10] Stevenson, "The Nature of Ethical Disagreement," *loc. cit.*, p. 591.

Suppose, under these interesting circumstances, that a disciple of this viewpoint, let us call him A, attempts to reduce a second disciple, B, to inanimate matter. How would we expect B to behave under these circumstances? The answer is that the logic of the situation dictates that B remain silent—not only for physical reasons, but because B is impartial and objective and knows that there is nothing that he could say which would convince A of the "error" of his ways; while A knows, simply as a matter of fact, that there is nothing that B could say which would constitute logical or inductive reasons for him to desist from completing the task which he has set for himself. Both know that facts and reasons support ethical judgments "psychologically," not logically; and therefore each discounts—for the sake of impartiality—the ethical arguments of the other. And even if we suppose that B gives up his rationally inspired silence and undertakes to persuade A to change his unsociable ways, the situation remains unchanged; ethical judgments, in their primary role of persuasion, are wasted on A, since A knows that such persuasion constitutes an attempt to persuade him "psychologically," an attempt at influence which he can not, in the interest of impartiality, ever allow to take place.

So, of course, A reduces B to inanimate matter, and B allows this reduction to take place, thus showing how impartial application of the theory leads to a satisfactory resolution of all "differences." (It is an interesting consequence of this theory that its disciples may have "differences," but never disagreements.) It is to be noted that we are confronted here with a situation in which two men have allowed themselves to be psychologically persuaded by a theory of psychological persuasion and have then tacitly gone on to label that persuasion as rational persuasion, the kind of persuasion which, according to their ethical principles, can never be found in matters relating to ethical behavior.

It should be added that if complete factual agreement, followed by disagreement in attitude, does not support Stevenson's thesis, then, of course, neither does limited factual agreement, even if the disagreement in attitude is in respect to those matters of fact for which agreement exists. Thus, when Stevenson argues that two men, A and B, may both believe that an object X has the quality Q *and may on that account* have a disagreement in attitude, this does not conclusively show that the divergence in attitudes is not itself a function of divergence in belief; for the possibility still remains that the disagreement in attitude stems from a corresponding disagreement in belief about other matters relating Q to X, or qualifying that relationship. Stevenson tacitly assumes that a

factual proposition of the type "X has the quality Q" completely exhausts all matters of factual belief relating to Q and X, thus making it possible for him to say that any further disagreement must be a disagreement in attitude. In doing this, he is making the tacit assumption that the object X possesses the quality Q in an *absolute, unconditional* way, in abstraction from its contemporaries, and in a way which is not physically or discursively qualified.

This assumption is inherently anti-logical. It assumes that facts are atomic in nature, or that they can be described by self-sufficient atomic propositions. This representation of fact is not very far removed from the Cartesian concept of substance or the subject-predicate mode of thinking, to which it adheres in principle if not in detail. While the connection between the subject-predicate mode of thinking and emotivist metaphysics might be the profitable subject of further investigation, it will be sufficient for our purposes to note that atomic facts or self-sufficient Cartesian substances, physically and discursively unqualified, being inherently undiscoverable, lie outside the scope of inductive and deductive logic, and therefore outside the area in which objective agreement in belief is possible.

VI

To avoid those misinterpretations, which seem to occur gratuitously whenever the term "logical justification" or the term "rational" appears in an ethical discussion, two points should be emphasized: (1) There is nothing in the signification of the terms "logical justification" and "rational" which *per se* is antithetical to the admission or presence of emotive factors as components in *logical* support of ethical judgments; but such components, if logically contributory, do not have an intrinsic or self-sufficient logical status. (2) Nothing has been said which implies that a disagreement in attitude can not take place in a context of logical justification; but such disagreement, when it occurs, rests on further disagreement as to the true nature of things; i.e., it rests on a disagreement in belief.

In regard to the first point, while no infringement of rational principles or rules can be said to take place if emotive elements are present as conditionally dependent factors in logical support of the ethical judgment, the same is not true when they are set forth as the ultimate source of justification. In the latter case, the emotive elements are assumed to be isolated and self-justifying, simply by virtue of their *de facto* existence. It is at this point that the difference between Stevenson's theory of ethics and most

classical theories of ethics (including naturalistic ethics proper) most clearly reveals itself. For the classicists, "feeling," either in the pure form or in the cognitively complex form of "attitude," enters only as a conditionally qualified supporting factor, never as an intrinsically self-sufficient source of justification. As a factor of this kind, its logical status as a supporting element is a function of its relation to the many other interdependent factors which enter into the making of the ethical judgment, none of which can be said to be independently self-justifying. In contrast, Stevenson assumes that its status in the ethical judgment is unqualified and unqualifiable.

Apart from the fact that this treatment of "feeling" and "attitude" is Cartesian in its logic, there are experiential reasons for rejecting it. These may be made clear by carrying out the logical implications of this position. On the assumption of its truth, it should be logically impossible for us to speak of ethical judgments which specify which feelings or attitudes should predominate in our behavior and which should be excluded; for, on the emotivist's thesis, every ethical judgment is ultimately grounded in feeling or attitude, and one feeling or attitude can not contradict —or cognitively evaluate—another. But even an emotivist must admit that there are ethical judgments whose specific subject of concern is the admissibility or inadmissibility of certain attitudes or feelings on the principles laid down by rational inquiry. If, now, it is maintained that such judgments are grounded in feeling, then one is committed to the thesis that one feeling, in the form of an ethical judgment, can contradict or logically exclude a host of other feelings—a thesis which the emotivists themselves are the first to reject.

In respect to point (2), the issues involved may be made explicit by considering the case of a materialist and an idealist who, sincerely intent on settling their ethical differences in a context of logical justification, nevertheless find that they can not do so. Since they have agreed to abide by logical-inductive criteria, their disagreement in attitude must stem either from a difference of opinion as to the true nature of things ("disagreement in belief"), or from a disagreement about the adequacy of their respective methodologies, epistemologies, and metaphysics, all of which enter into the report of fact. This latter disagreement, which is concerned with the problematic principles and methodologies which establish rational or validated belief, is in reality a third kind of disagreement. It is, however, tacitly excluded from discussion by Stevenson, apparently in the belief that the reference to "fact" or "experience" is unproblematic, and a settled issue.

But, as Whitehead points out, the achievement of positive reference to fact and experience is the *final* goal of science and philosophy, not their point of origin; there are no clear and distinct "givens" from which all theorizing is to begin. In any case, it must be remembered that while agreement about factual matters may be readily obtained and granted in limited areas of activity and theory, such agreement becomes problematical and controversial in an ethical context, a context in which simplifying assumptions may not do at all.

VII

To sum up: Stevenson's distinction between disagreement in belief and disagreement in attitude, if it is significant for ethical theory, depends on showing that there are conscious and unconscious psychological influences, unique to value judgments, which are unpredictable, uncontrollable, and, in a word, capricious. On this thesis, the influences which motivate men either must lie outside the domain of natural law and science or they must have their origin in incorrigible early conditioning. If the first is the case, then there is no science of biology, psychology, or sociology; and it is impossible to assign any significant logical status or truth-value to matters of fact which belong to these "sciences," or to agreements in belief which rely on them for the report of fact. If the second is the case, then the difference which is alleged to exist between scientific and ethical propositions is not really explained, since early training, if incorrigible, is equally as inimical to the establishment of objective fact as it is to the establishment of objective ethical judgment. A factor which is common to judgments in two different areas of evaluation can not be used as the factor which differentiates the two areas.

The fact that we are conditioned to have the particular attitudes which we do have, while *de facto,* is not *inalterable* fact. Otherwise education and scientific training would be impossible, and we should all be fated to behave semi-mechanically, like the ants with their predestined patterns of behavior. But as long as we can be conditioned to adopt attitudes which are rational and critical, the fact that there is early or haphazard conditioning is not significant for ethical theory; at least, not in the respects which have been claimed.

In this connection, we should note that the emotivists have attempted to make much out of the fact of conditioning, apparently in the belief that the fact of its existence uniquely supports an emotive interpretation of ethical judgments. This belief is surely mistaken. Conditioning describes a neutral fact, a correlate of

the principle that nothing happens just anyhow. Thus, conditioning is something which happens to the saint and the sinner alike, to the disciplined scientist and the undiscriminating savage, to the classicist and the emotivist. It does not, therefore, constitute a unique point of support for any specific ethical theory.

In explaining his thesis, Stevenson has contended that the following kinds of agreement-disagreement illustrate its truth:

1. Limited *Agreement in Belief* followed by *Disagreement in Attitude* in the area of agreement.

2. Exhaustive *Agreement in Belief* followed by *Disagreement in Attitude.*

The first, like the unlisted remaining combinations of agreement-disagreement, does not uniquely support a "psychological" interpretation of ethical judgments; while it is only compatible with that interpretation if a narrow, Cartesian concept of fact is assumed. The second, presumably the real test case for Stevenson's thesis, turns out to embody a logical contradiction, and therefore to be a logical impossibility; for agreement in belief, if objective, presupposes the adoption of generic and constitutive attitudes of the kind which exclude attitudes for which no logical-inductive justification is forthcoming, and therefore exclude disagreements in attitude of the kind which have their origin in irrational psychological influences. If such (indefensible) attitudes are not excluded, then any existing agreement in belief is without significance, since the attitudes which are necessary for the objective determination and acceptance of fact are also absent. Thus, if the agreement in belief has objective acceptance, there can be no disagreement in attitude (which is not based on disagreement in belief); while if the disagreement in attitude is real and based on "psychological" influences, the agreement in belief is a pseudo-one, and without objective significance.

Stevenson's principal contention has been that facts and reasons "support" ethical judgments "psychologically," not logically. This use of the term "psychological" fails to differentiate between *de facto* irrationality, or the irrationality that happens to be, and *metaphysical* irrationality, or inalterable logical or inductive disconnection, due to uncontrollable causes or uncaused causes. If Stevenson's use of the term is in the first sense, then the only conclusion which follows is the tautologous truism that while rational persuasion exists, some people are not so persuaded. If his use of the term is in the second sense, and one argues that attitudes are irremediably irrational, then objective agreement in belief can not take place, since fundamental and constitutive at-

titudes of a valuational kind are indispensable for establishing facts and factual agreement.

In short, if attitudes of a valuational kind enter as a prior condition into the determination of fact, and one is committed to the view that the underlying influences, while causal in nature, are unpredictable and capricious, then factual beliefs are made dependent on a component of caprice, and the basic distinction between logical and illogical, predictable and unpredictable, upon which Stevenson's whole thesis depends, is fatally vitiated.

For these reasons, one must conclude that the distinction between "belief" and "attitude," in the manner set forth, does not successfully settle the real nature of ethical disputes.

SOLOMON E. LEVY

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

BOOK REVIEWS

Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker. HERMANN DIELS. Sechste, verbesserte Auflage, herausgegeben von Walther Kranz. Erster Band. Berlin-Grunewald: Weidmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung. 1951. xii, 504 pp. (Obtainable through International University Booksellers Ltd., 94 Gower St., London, W.C.1, at £2/17/6.)

Philosophers and the more serious teachers and students of philosophy will welcome the re-availability of one of the great source books in the history of the subject, originally issued in modest form in 1903. This new edition, the 6th, of Diels-Kranz replaces the 5th edition (1934–37), long since out of print and difficult of access in secondhand form because of the troubled international situation of the last decade. It is to appear in three volumes, of which this, containing the beginnings of Greek philosophy and the fragments of the early philosophers from Thales to the Pythagorean School, is the first. The second volume, from Anaxagoras through the older Sophists, was scheduled for the latter part of 1951, and the third volume, containing word, name, and passage indices, for the spring of 1952. The format, typography, and cloth binding of the present volume are all admirable.

Due, as Kranz implies in the Foreword, to pecuniary difficulties the new edition is in substance a photographic reprint of the 5th, with corrections of misprints and with the addition to each volume of a Supplement. For this reason a description of the scheme and arrangement of the work will be unnecessary. Suffice it to say

that the supplementary section in this first volume runs to 22 pages of small-type notes, bringing the work abreast of textual and exegetical scholarship as of February, 1951. The most important accessions are in the sections on Heraclitus and Empedocles. The American reader will note with gratification that American scholarship in Pre-Socratic philosophy receives its due, especially in a recognition of the importance of the labors of Cherniss. It is of course an inconvenience to have the new material placed at the end of each volume, rather than at the foot of the page with the other notes. Indeed, as Kranz recognizes, the time has come for an expanded text which should be an entire reworking of the Pre-Socratic field—to which, after all, Diels' original effort was intended only as a vade mecum supplementary to oral lectures. But, as Kranz pointedly adds, "Der Gedanke ist an sich natürlich sehr begrüssenswert; auch fehlte es nicht an wissenschaftlichen Kräften, ihn zu verwirklichen. Aber nur auf internationaler Basis wäre er durchzuführen und nur unter Einsatz sehr grosser Geldmittel, schon weil ja der Umfang des Ganzen—man denke nur an die Pythagoreer- und die Demokrittradition!—gewaltig zunehmen würde." In the meantime the English-speaking student will be grateful that the present edition of Diels-Kranz still permits of easy reference from the widely used *Ancilla* and *Companion to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers* of Kathleen Freeman, which are grounded upon the 5th edition.

In any case, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* remains as a monument of modern scholarship and a work which no self-respecting university library or philosophy department should be without.

A. L. Hilliard

University of Western Ontario

Art and Society: A Reinterpretation of Plato. Catherine Rau. New York: Richard R. Smith Publisher, Inc. 1951. 88 pp. $2.50.

In this book on Plato's theory of art the question is raised "what is the relation of art to morality?" A straightforward answer might have been given by recognizing that for Plato the Good and the Beautiful are at base one, and that when art and morality are followed to their ground in metaphysics this ground will be found to be common to both. An answer of this sort would emphasize that for Plato art (*techné*) is defined as man's precise, knowing, operations on nature for any envisaged good and that ultimately beauty is defined in terms similar to those defining good

(the Greek word *kalos* may be translated either as beautiful or good). In Plato's philosophy a good life is comparable to a masterpiece of art; both are ordered, harmonious, balanced, well-proportioned, rhythmic, and there are no separate aesthetic concepts. The good life and the good work of art are both characterized by the observance of measure. The royal art is that of the wisest and best men, the philosopher-kings; because of their wisdom (and goodness) they are the best judges of human activities, including art, and since beauty is closely related to good, it is inevitable that art will be judged at least in part by criteria of goodness. Under the guidance of wise men Plato's citizens will "dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear, like a health-giving breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul from earliest years into likeness and sympathy with the beauty of reason" (*Republic,* Bk. III, 401).

It would have been an achievement of great importance to clarify the relations between art and morality. Dr. Rau was in a position to accomplish this, since she recognizes that Plato "occasionally suggests that the beautiful is identical with, or similar to, the good" (p. 30), that for Plato "beauty and good are not . . . two separate spheres" (p. 70), and that Plato has an "earnest conviction that the representation of the noblest and best life is the truest tragedy" (p. 32). In fact, Dr. Rau's conclusion is the correct one, namely, that "the aesthetic judgment is mediated by the moral judgment." But, instead of following this approach, Dr. Rau restates the issue in terms of whether or not Plato commits the "moralistic fallacy" (i.e., judges "the worth of art *as art* by its . . . moral effects") and then argues that he does not because he has one "intrinsic" standard for judging art, namely, beauty, and another for judging morality, namely, goodness. She says, for Plato "the value of art as art is beauty, while moral efficacy is the value of art as material for pedagogy and propaganda" (p. 28). Thus she falls into the error of making the very distinction Plato opposed, that is, the splitting of art and morality, and the book is thrown into confusion.

The separation of art and morality leads Dr. Rau to treat every restriction Plato puts on art as if it were merely a political or practical expedient and to assert in one place and deny in another that Plato judges art as art at least in part by moral criteria. This does not make for clarity. We find Dr. Rau first saying (pp. 18, 19, 30, 40) that Plato's restrictions on art are the result of his being primarily concerned with writing politics or theory of education (i.e., he is not really using moral criteria for judging art *per se*) and then saying (p. 62) that in the *Republic* Plato holds that good

rhythm and mode in music follow from good style and good style is determined by good moral qualities. So the reader shuttles back and forth between Dr. Rau's repeated assertions that Plato does not judge art *per se* in terms of morality and her constant reference to passages which assert the contrary; for example, she refers us to the following from the *Laws:* "the figures and melodies which are expressive of virtue of soul or body, or of images of virtue, are without exception good, and those which are expressions of vice are the reverse of good." Dr. Rau points out that the basis of Plato's objection to contemporary art was moral; that is, the new art expressed emotion instead of representing character, it depended more on illusion and appearance than on reality, and it did not enhance the meaning of religious and civic life (pp. 46–47). More of Plato's moral preoccupation is revealed on page 67 where Dr. Rau tells us that Plato finds grace and harmony (i.e., beauty) akin to moral goodness and that aesthetic qualities follow from good moral character. But she also tells us (pp. 55–56) that art which is found good on purely aesthetic grounds is found to produce desirable moral effects—once more art and morality are split apart.

To add to the confusion Dr. Rau compares Plato's view on music to Taine's on literature and argues their similarity. Taine believes that a book which portrays morally beneficial traits is more beautiful than one showing harmful traits. Similarly, says Dr. Rau, Plato holds "a piece of music which represents morally good characters or actions has aesthetic value, while one with immoral subjects has aesthetic disvalue" (p. 65). It is not always easy to tell which side of the argument Dr. Rau is on or the precise point she is trying to establish. To me it is quite incomprehensible to declare in one and the same paragraph (p. 69) that Plato is not committing the "moralistic fallacy" and yet that for him "a work of art is beautiful if and when it satisfies our moral feelings."

Almost all those who accuse Plato of the "moralistic fallacy" resent most the severe strictures he placed on art by means of censorship. That this censorship is severe there is no denying. Its explanation lies, of course, in Plato's theses of the close relations of art to morality, of the wisdom of philosopher-kings, and of the compatibility of the highest art (dialectic) with all good art. Dr. Rau, however, is so eager to defend Plato against the "moralistic fallacy" that she writes as if every time Plato places strictures on art he is not writing aesthetics but politics and somehow doesn't mean what he writes. This is to fail at just the point where Dr. Rau accuses others of failing, namely, in interpreting Plato without adequate understanding of either his overall view or his life and times. Plato's aesthetics are not in one compartment of his mind

and his politics and theory of education in others. After all, for him the royal art is that of ordering human life and there is no sense in minimizing his restrictions on what he considers bad drama, painting, or music. Dr. Rau engages in such minimization. For example, after admitting Plato's rigorous censorship of comedy, she says that he "is far more liberal . . . in regard to tragedy." To prove this point we are referred to the *Laws*, VII, 817 a-d, where actually the power of full censorship over the poets is given to the magistrates.

In considering Book X of the *Republic*, Dr. Rau concludes that it is not meant to be an aesthetic but is merely part of a theory of education and that Plato is not here interested in "the ontic status of art *per se*" (p. 43). On the same page, however, Dr. Rau reveals Plato's interest in the ontic status of art by writing "Plato is adopting what is indubitably a naive common sense opinion current then as now, i.e. the view that art copies nature, and he is backing it with his Doctrine of Ideas . . . ." Apparently Dr. Rau believes that by minimizing Plato's restrictions on art and by treating them as educational or political expedients, she is making a better case for his real love of art. It is not surprising that her defense of Book X concludes by reducing the book to "a dignified (though indignant) editorial in a conservative newspaper entitled 'What is Wrong with The Art of Our Generation.'"

Another point is worthy of mention. Dr. Rau writes as if Plato's strictures on art applied only to the particular art of his time and not to art in general. For example, her reading of *Republic*, X, 603c–606b. That Plato did not approve much of the art of his day is probably true and the point has certainly been made long ago (e.g., see R. G. Steven, "Plato and the Art of His Time," *The Classical Quarterly*, Vol. XXVII, 1933, p. 150). But it seems obvious that what Plato did not like about the new art he did not like about any art. The point is perfectly general and should not be limited unnecessarily.

It is fashionable to treat Plato as a sort of super Gestapo agent whose job it is to recklessly obliterate art from a culture. Dr. Rau shows clearly the stupidity of this view. Also, she exposes the foolishness of some critics, e.g., Pater's simple idea that his interpretation of art for art's sake was shared by Plato, Croce's view that Plato believed art to serve only sensual pleasure, Carritt's view that for Plato the only value of art is the virtue it can foster.

There are sound admonitions in Dr. Rau's book: for example, to "interpret any given (Platonic) passage in the light of the others on the same subject," and to "take into account . . . the place and time in which he (Plato) found himself, and particularly

the works of art with which he was actually surrounded." Finally, Dr. Rau is quite correct in emphasizing Plato's view that knowledge is an important element in *techné*, that the artist must be morally sensitive, and that art divorced from morality is *kolakeia*.

ROBERT D. MACK

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Straton von Lampsakos. FRITZ WEHRLI. (*Die Schule des Aristoteles*, Heft V.) Basel: Benno Schwabe & Co. 1950. 83 pp. Fr. 12.

One of the more interesting and less known figures in the history of thought is Strato of Lampsacus, on the Hellespont, leader of the Peripatetic school after Aristotle and Theophrastus. He is one of the great "contrary to fact conditionals" in the development of the Western world—a thinker who in his work marked out the path philosophy and science might have taken but did not, until after the passage of fourteen centuries of stagnation, retrogression, and extravagance. For it was Strato, with his heritage of Ionian levelheadedness, who carried to its farthest point in ancient times Aristotle's empirical reaction from Plato's mysticism, anthropocentrism, and disastrous dualisms, and who pointed the way to a scientifically fruitful reconciliation of the system of the Stagirite with that of his great predecessor and rival, Democritus. It is one of the melancholy turns of human history that by the impending cultural tendencies of his age Strato's efforts to rescue philosophy and science from the realm of fantasy and wish-fulfillment were foredoomed—save for his influence on the brilliant but abortive development of Hellenistic medicine, mechanics, and astronomy—and the lessons which might have been gleaned from his works (completely and tragically lost, of course) had to be relearned in the Renaissance, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and indeed in our own times.

As we turn at random through the poignantly short assemblage of notices and fragments of Strato's work here collected for the first time—and this is all we have to take the place of the forty-six curiosity-provoking titles listed as "extant" in Diogenes Laertius —we are struck by many a doctrine and even turn of phrase reminiscent of contemporary thought. He is through and through a naturalist, without even Aristotle's eccentric reservations: ". . . in his view the sole repository of divine power is nature, which contains in itself the causes of birth, growth, and decay . . ." (Fragment 33, from Cicero); ". . . he declares that he does not

make use of divine activity for constructing the world. His doctrine is that all existing things of whatever sort have been produced by natural causes . . ." (Fr. 32, Cicero again). One is reminded of the reply of Laplace to Napoleon, "Je n'avais pas besoin de cette hypothèse-là." With his naturalism goes an open empiricism and devotion to the scientific spirit: ". . . a distinguished man who is generally known as 'the physicist', because more than anyone else he devoted himself to the most careful study of nature" (Fr. 1, Diogenes Laertius)—and this in an age when ethics was the center of the philosophical curriculum and when was heard ever more strongly the far-off cry of salvation; ". . . whatsoever things have not first been perceived, the same cannot be conceived, whether places or regions or pictures or statues or men, or anything else of the sort" (Fr. 74, Simplicius). Centuries in advance of his time—in advance indeed of the whole Greek ethos—Strato insists upon the experimental method in science: "Many other experiments about the nature of the void might be adduced but these may suffice, for they depend on the evidence of observable phenomena" (following Fr. 64, Hero Alexandrinus). He rejects completely Aristotle's historically misleading doctrine of "natural places" and with it all natural teleology: "Strato holds that weight is an inherent quality of physical substances, and that the lighter move above the heavier as being squeezed upward" (Fr. 51, Stobaeus). The primary elements of the world, while physical, are not the naïve atoms of Democritus but its irreducible qualities: "Στράτων δὲ ὁ φυσικὸς τὰς ποιότητας (sc. ἀρχὰς εἶναι εἶπεν," Fr. 43, Sextus Empiricus). His psychology of perception is advanced, not only beyond his own age, but, in his rejection of autonomous sense-data, beyond almost any prior to the late nineteenth century: ". . . without [the coöperation of the] mind, there cannot be any sensation . . ." (Fr. 112, Plutarch). He maintains the natural unity of the soul, refusing to reify the intellect: "While some assert that it is distinct from the senses, others say that it is the senses,—it peering out through the sense-organs as through peep-holes,—which theory was first held by Strato the physicist and Aenesidemus" (Fr. 109, Sextus Empiricus). Throughout his work, indeed, there is evident an indefatigable aspiration for a consistent and reasonable monism. It is no wonder that his lectures were ill-attended (Fr. 8, Plutarch) and that his teachings were held in contempt in the declining ages of the ancient world: "Nec audiendus . . . Strato" (Nor is Strato worthy of attention); for ". . . he abandoned the most essential part of philosophy, that concerned with virtue and morals, to devote himself entirely to research in natural science . . ." (Frs. 33 and 13, Cicero).

In this well-printed volume the Stratonic texts, 147 in number, are grouped according to general subject matter and are arranged as far as possible with reference to the titles of Strato's lost works. This occupies the first 40 pages; the remaining 43 pages are given over to a bibliography—necessarily short, since as yet there exists no thoroughgoing study of the philosopher—and a helpful commentary in German. This is the fifth volume in the series, *Die Schule des Aristoteles*, which promises to take its place with Diels-Kranz, von Arnim, Usener, et al., as a definitive collection of materials for the study of a neglected period of Greek philosophy. The first four volumes provided texts and commentary on Dicaearchus of Messina, Aristoxenus of Tarentum, Clearchus of Soli, and Demetrius of Phalerum; the next two to appear will do likewise for Ariston of Ceos and Heraclides of Pontus. The series, of approximately ten volumes altogether, is to conclude with an historical sketch of the Peripatetic school and in this last volume will be presented also comprehensive indices to the whole.

It is to be hoped that, thus provided with the basic materials to hand, some scholar will then produce the definitive study of the Peripatetic tradition and its unrivaled stimulus to empirical science which has heretofore been sadly lacking. Here is an open opportunity for some aspiring American doctoral candidate or young teacher to make a world-wide name for himself! In the meantime this fine volume is evidence of the first-rate philosophical scholarship being produced at the present time in Switzerland.

A. L. Hilliard

University of Western Ontario

Brutus; On the Nature of the Gods; On Divination; On Duties. Marcus Tullius Cicero. Translated by Hubert M. Poteat, with an Introduction by Richard McKeon. The University of Chicago Press. 1950. v, 661 pp. $6.00.

This new translation presents to the student of philosophy four of Cicero's most interesting works in a rendering that seems to be extremely careful and accurate and at the same time free and elegant. The occasional use of modern and even colloquial expressions is quite acceptable, though in such cases it might have been helpful to add in parentheses the original Latin term (e.g., when *aequum* is translated as natural law, p. 111, or *auctoritas* as dogmatic pronouncement, p. 181). There are useful historical notes at the end of the volume, but problems of textual criticism have been ignored. It is a pity that the translation carries only the chapter numbers and not also the paragraph numbers which are

quite generally used in referring to Cicero's works. The question of Cicero's philosophical sources is discussed rather briefly (p. 63–64), and the bibliography (p. 64–65) is limited to titles in English. The criteria used for selecting these four among Cicero's works are not apparent. If emphasis was to be placed on those works that show his own convictions, I should have preferred the *Tusculan Disputations* rather than the *De natura deorum*, let alone the *De divinatione*. And if a rhetorical work was to be included, the *Orator* might have been more interesting than the *Brutus*, for the latter does give a specimen of literary criticism, but mostly exercised on authors whose works are lost. McKeon's introduction gives a most valuable and lucid presentation of Cicero's place and merits in the history of philosophical thought with which I fully agree. In the discussion of the philosophical schools which preceded and influenced Cicero, more emphasis might have been placed on Panaetius' differences from earlier Stoic doctrine, on his concept of decorum and of the moral variety between different classes and individuals. Also the term "duty," which for the modern reader invariably has a Kantian ring, seems to require some explanation. For Cicero, "duties" are not actions that follow a moral command and hence are inherently valuable, but they are merely modes of conduct that are basically indifferent but in reasonable agreement with moral principles. It is to be hoped that this useful volume will help to restore Cicero to his rightful place on the reading lists and book shelves of students and teachers of philosophy.

PAUL O. KRISTELLER

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

NOTES AND NEWS

We regret to learn that Paul Marhenke, Professor of Philosophy and Chairman of the Department in the University of California, Berkeley, died in San Francisco on Friday, February 29, 1952.

Professor Charles A. Baylis has been appointed Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Philosophy at Duke University, beginning July 1, 1952.

Dr. A. L. Hilliard, of the University of Western Ontario, has accepted appointment for the coming academic year in the University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

The Woodbridge Lectures will be delivered by Harry Todd Costello, Professor of Philosophy at Trinity College, on the subject "Perceptions, Systems, Possibilities," from March 25 to April 4 at Columbia University. The titles of the individual lectures are: "The Situation," "Systems," "Perceptions," and "Possibilities and Values."

The Philosophy of Education Society has established a Committee on Information Service: Vacancies and Available Personnel, to assist the profession in the placement of candidates for positions in the philosophy and history of education and related areas. Interested persons, whether applicants for positions or department heads seeking new personnel, should write to Dr. Louise Antz, New York University, New York 3, N. Y.

The Philosophy of Education Society will hold its annual meeting in St. Louis, April 6–9. Professor Louise Antz of New York University is president and Professor William E. Drake of the University of Missouri is secretary-treasurer.

Subscriptions to the Journal of Philosophy will be $5.25 a year instead of $5.00 beginning April 1, 1952, because of increased postage rates. Single numbers, mailed, will be 35 cents, double numbers 60 cents.

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

There is no similar journal in the field of scientific philosophy. It is issued fortnightly and permits the quick publication of short contributions, prompt reviews, timely discussions, notes on new books and other journals, and news of philosophic interest. The last five issues contain:

VOLUME XLIX

No. 1. January 3, 1952.

Plausibility in Fiction. ROBERT T. HARRIS.

Review of James B. Conant's *Science and Common Sense* by RAPHAEL DEMOS.

No. 2. January 17, 1952.

UNESCO Report on the Investigation Concerning Freedom. H. J. Pos.

No. 3. January 31, 1952.

Criteria of Explanation in History. E. W. STRONG.

Some Aspects of Causation in History. E. J. TAPP.

No. 4. February 14, 1952.

Double Number.

On a Supposed Resurgence of Vicious Intellectualism. ARTHUR O. LOVEJOY.

Mindless Empiricism. SIDNEY HOOK.

In Defense of Individualistic Empiricism: A Reply to Messrs. Lovejoy and Hook. VICTOR LOWE.

Rejoinder to Mr. Lowe. ARTHUR O. LOVEJOY.

Not Mindful Enough. SIDNEY HOOK.

Note on a Not-So-Vicious Intellectualism. HERBERT W. SCHNEIDER.

No. 5. February 28, 1952.

Has Russell Answered Hume? HIRAM J. MCLENDON.

Has James Answered Hume? SING-NAN FEN.

Communication: The Concept of Man and the Philosophy of Education in East and West. KURT F. LEIDECKER.

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

515 W. 116th St., New York 27, N. Y.

$5.00 per annum (26 numbers) single numbers, 30 cents; double numbers, 60 cents

A New French Edition with Notes of the

Complete Philosophical Works of

CONDILLAC

Edited by G. LE ROY

3 *quarto* volumes—2000 pages
Paper bound $15.00 — Cloth bound $20.00
(Postage Additional)

Order from American Bookstores or directly from the publishers

PRESSES UNIVERSITAIRES de FRANCE
180, Boulevard Saint-Germain, Paris VIe

These are the first volumes to appear in a monumental

CORPUS GENERAL
DES PHILOSOPHES FRANÇAIS

under the general editorship of Raymond Bayer, Director of the International Institute of Philosophy of the Sorbonne, Paris, and sponsored by UNESCO. Prospectus of the 33 volumes available on application.

The Works of BUFFON in Press

An Exceptional Opportunity for Libraries to Purchase Classics at Bargain Prices. Continuation Orders Welcome.